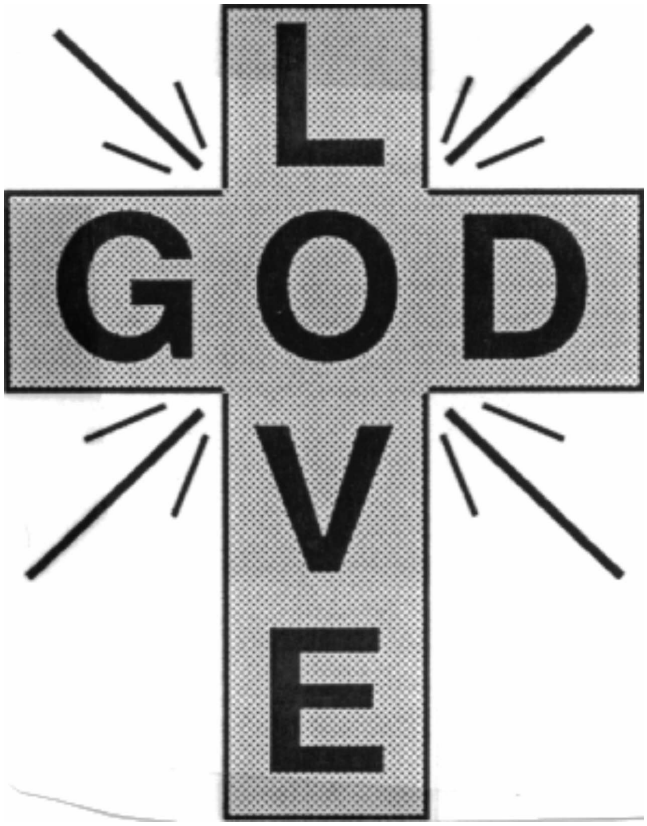

THE BOY WHO MET THE REAL KING

A Children's Story

By Jim Giatas

(Ages 6 - 12)

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Introduction

for adults and children ages 6–12

Stories have a special way of opening our hearts. They let us imagine dragons, pirates, brave knights, and far-off places we've never seen. Children know this better than anyone. They step into a story with both feet, believing—just for a moment—that anything might be possible.

But sometimes, when the book closes, the characters fade. The colors grow quiet. The magic settles back into the page.

This little book is about a boy named **Eli**, who loved stories just like many children do. He loved pretending, imagining, and dreaming. Yet deep inside, he wondered if there was Someone who didn't disappear when the story ended—Someone real, Someone who stayed.

One day, Eli discovers that there *is* such a King.
Not a pretend king with a cardboard crown.
Not a storybook king who lives only in pictures.
But a King who is alive, who speaks, who loves, and who never fades.

This story is written for children, but it carries a truth that adults will recognize too:
the difference between the characters we imagine and the King who is truly real.

As you read this book—whether aloud to a child or quietly to yourself—may you feel the warmth of that truth. May you remember, as Eli learns, that beyond every story, beyond every page and picture, there is a King who whispers to every heart:

"I am here."

1. The Make-Believe Forest

Once there was a boy named **Eli** who loved stories more than anything in the world.
He read them in bed, under trees, in the car, and sometimes even while brushing his teeth.

In Eli's imagination, the world was full of wonderful things.
Dragons curled up in caves.
Pirates sailed across the sky.
A brave knight named Sir Bramble rode a giant rabbit into battle.

Eli knew these characters weren't real — but sometimes, when he closed his eyes, they felt almost real enough to touch.

2. The Day the Stories Faded

One morning, Eli opened his favorite book and felt something strange.

The characters looked… quieter.
The colors seemed… dimmer.
Even Sir Bramble's rabbit looked tired.

"What's wrong?" Eli whispered.

But the characters didn't answer.
They never did, of course — they were only pretend.

Still, Eli felt a little sad.
He wished there were someone who didn't fade when the book closed.

3. The Whisper in the Wind

That afternoon, Eli walked into the woods behind his house.
Sunlight sprinkled through the leaves like golden dust.

As he wandered, he heard something — not loud, not scary, just a gentle whisper.

"Eli."

He spun around.
No one was there.

"Who's calling me?" he asked.

The whisper came again, warm and kind.

"I am."

4. The King Appears

A soft light glowed between the trees.
It wasn't bright like lightning or sharp like fire.
It was warm — like the feeling you get when someone you love smiles at you.

From the light stepped a **King**.

Not a pretend king with a cardboard crown.
Not a storybook king with a velvet cape.

This King looked real in a way Eli couldn't explain — more real than the trees, more real than the ground beneath his feet.

"Are you from a story?" Eli asked.

The King smiled.
"No, Eli. Stories can be beautiful, but they are not alive. I am."

5. The King's Gift

The King knelt so His eyes were level with Eli's.

"You love stories," He said.
"That is good. Stories help your heart grow. But I want to give you something better."

He placed His hand over Eli's heart.

"I want to give you **truth** — the kind that never fades when the book closes."

Eli felt warmth spread through him, like sunlight filling his chest.

"Will you stay with me?" Eli asked.

"I already do," the King answered.
"And I always will."

6. The Return to the Forest

The light faded gently, like the last note of a lullaby.
The King was gone — but Eli didn't feel sad.

He felt full.

When he opened his favorite book again that night, the characters looked bright and joyful once more.
But now Eli knew something important:

They were pretend.
The King was not.

7. A New Kind of Story

From that day on, Eli still loved his books.
He still imagined dragons and pirates and brave knights.

But he also knew that beyond all the stories — beyond every page and picture — there was Someone real who loved him.

And sometimes, when the wind rustled the leaves just right, Eli heard the whisper again:

“I am here.”

And he smiled.

Because he knew the King was real.